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THE PANAMA CANAL.

Big Work of Shonts During the Past Twenty Months.

Theodore P. Shonts was appointed chairman of the Panama Canal commission April 3, 1905, a little less than two years ago and began work immediately. Since then a great deal more has been accomplished than the public is aware of.

The Panama railway has been practically rebuilt and double-tracked for a considerable distance. Terminal yards have been created on both oceans. The rolling stock and equipment have been increased by 184 locomotives, 3,460 cars, sixty-three steam shovels, twenty-three earth spreaders, twenty-two rapid unloaders, seven dredges, seventeen steel barges, two tugs, ten cranes and one pile driver.

The harbors have been dredged and new wharves have been built with the most modern machinery, so that the largest ships can come up to them and be unloaded with great speed. It is possible to unload the cargo of a vessel every five days.

The City of Panama has been paved, sewerage and supplied with an abundance of fresh water. Two years ago it had neither pavements nor water supply. It was a hot-bed of disease. Today it is the best paved, best-watered and the best sewered city between the United States and Chile and the Argentine Republic.

Colon has been paved with vitrified brick and crushed rock, and has been made as healthful as its low condition will permit.

Colon has been given a reservoir containing 508,000,000 gallons of fresh water.

Yellow fever has been driven permanently from the isthmus. That, Mr. Shonts thinks, is the supreme achievement. For fourteen months there has not been a single case among the 30,000 employees.

The canal zone is as healthful as New York city. During the most unhealthy period of the year 1906, in the rainy season, August, September and October, there was not one death from disease among the 6,000 white Americans, including 1,200 women and children.

The greatest construction plant ever known has been created at a cost of \$12,000,000. Every piece of machinery, every locomotive and car, every labor-saving contrivance had to be set up and tested in this country then taken apart, transported 2,000 miles by sea and set up again before it could be put to use. To do this vast machine shops had to be erected, equipped with all forms of modern appliances and several thousand machinists employed. Every foot of lumber, every tool, every nail, every pound of paint, every bit of plumbing material, every piece of furniture and almost every article that is in use on the isthmus by those who are digging the canal had to be transported 2,000 miles.

Nearly every ounce of food consumed in the canal zone during these two years has been carried from the United States in refrigerator steamers and distributed along the line of the canal daily from refrigerator cars. In the messhouses meals are furnished to the higher grades of employees at 30 cents each, and recently the government has undertaken, as a sanitary precaution, to board the common laborers, and is furnishing them three hot meals of nourishing food per day at 10 cents a meal. Chief Engineer Stevens believes that this will increase their efficiency, and Dr. George is confident that it will increase their power to withstand disease.

Up to Jan. 31, 1907, \$32,000,000 had been spent; \$4,500,000 in sanitation and the establishment of a government; \$7,000,000 in the construction of quarters and other buildings; railroads, docks, wharves, water works, etc.; \$12,000,000 in permanent machinery and construction plant; \$4,500,000 in material and supplies, and \$1,500,000 in sewers, waterworks, paving and other improvements in Panama and Colon, which will be ultimately refunded to the government.

Once Hanged by Guerrillas.

John McGrogan who was hanged by guerrillas during the civil war, but was cut down by some of Sherman's cavalrymen in time to save his life, died, aged 84 years. McGrogan met with his trying experience during the march to the sea. He was one of a foraging party of eight which was captured by the band of guerrillas.

The prisoners were strung up to the limbs of trees by their captors, who had hardly gotten away when a party of Union cavalrymen arrived and cut down the hanging bodies. Of the eight men McGrogan was the only one that could be revived. He had been terribly injured by the pressure of the rope, but recovered and served throughout the war.

Death of Mrs. Longbrake.

Mrs. Elizabeth Longbrake died Saturday, July 26, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Elias Compton, near Inwood, aged 75 years. Deceased was the widow of Rev. Hiram Longbrake, who died July 13, 1902. The family came here from Ohio about 25 years ago and made their home in this country. Mrs. Longbrake was an excellent Christian lady and had the esteem of all who knew her. A son who resides in Ohio and her daughter, Mrs. Compton, are her only living children. Funeral services were held at Bethel church Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

Another Texas Letter.

Stratford, Texas, Jan. 25, 1907. Editor Tribune:

Time is a little heavy on my hands and I thought to say another word of the handle of the Texas pan. I was with the procession Monday looking at their landed interests and caught one of the worst complete colds of the season. The wind was coming across the prairie so fast we couldn't get out of the way of all of it and I caught a fine cold in my head. You know a cold always lands on the weakest part of your anatomy. Let me say to any friend who is coming this way to bring your warmest overcoat and cap etc. They have all kinds of weather here in 24 hours. Yesterday afternoon the wind shifted to the northwest and in an hour was blowing a gale and kept it up until this morning when it melted down and snowed enough to cover the ground.

Then the sun came out and this afternoon the business houses have the doors open and the sun shone bright as in May. The atmosphere is fine and is sore death to catarrh but yet it is not so healthy that they have to kill a man to start a graveyard.

The people think nothing of killing a beef and hanging it up for a month without salting. It will turn dark on the outside and shrink up some but is as good in ten days as one. I was at the camp of the Plymouth Colony near Coulton Monday and found them all well and comparatively contented.

In the settling down George Good-year got a piece of land that was not perfect and the agent was there that day to relocate him on something satisfactory and as he and Harry Ritchie were to put down a well together, it necessitated Harry's removal also and he was feeling a little blue because he had a prime quarter, but in the shift secured one equally as good. Stratford is experiencing a coal famine and are also out of gasoline. Farmers are coming many miles for coal and are obliged to go home without it. The business here is done in a slipshod way and a good live northern man with a little capital can do well. The farming proposition is on the game scale and a good live northern man with a few thousand dollars can lay the foundation for ease and independence in a few years. Stock is fed but a couple of months in the winter and even now stock is grazing the dried buffalo grass and wheat. By the way, they pasture the wheat from the time it is up until the middle of April and some of the best farmers told me it was better because it packs the ground and takes off any surplus growth. They only sow a half bushels to the acre and cut as high as thirty bushels per acre. Oats does well and is selling for 55 cents a bushel or if unthreshed at 10 cents a bundle. Forage is scarce owing to the small number here to grow it last year, and the demand is great because so many have come in recently. Good cows, horses and hogs are in demand at good prices, and there is not a half dozen pairs of harness in the town and no harness material at all.

I am feeling much improved in health in the brief time I have been here and am thinking seriously of making Texas my future home.

With kind regards,
F. M. McCrory.

Handy Should Enforce Law.

Now that the legislature has killed the bill proposing the abolition of capital punishment in Indiana, it remains to be seen whether Governor Hanly will carry out his implied threat and commute the sentences of the four red-handed murderers awaiting execution at Michigan City. If he does take action of this kind he will merit and receive some of the harshest sort of criticism. He should remember that he was elected to execute the laws, not to pass on their propriety. Since taking office he has had much to say respecting obedience to law, and it is to be hoped that he will live up to his truly excellent precepts. He is no more entitled to nullify the statute prescribing the death penalty because he does not like it, than a saloon keeper is entitled to nullify the Sunday closing law because it does not conform to his sense of the eternal fitness of things. It is to be hoped that the governor will see the point—Fort Wayne News (Rep.)

New Laws Should Be Good Laws.

It is announced that the Republicans of the state assembly have decided on passing a bill to create a separate department of insurance, with a commissioner of insurance at its head, a private banking bill, a public depository bill, an anti-trust bill, and a two-cent fare bill. They declare that the Republican platform specifically declared in favor of these measures, and the campaign was fought by the party along the lines of reform. While this is partially true it does not cover all the provisions, particularly of the insurance bill. It was hardly understood or advocated by the party that a new department of insurance was to be created. The private banking bill too, was not a definite promise of the platform, or of the announced principles of the party. The banking law needs to be carefully safeguarded, and while we do not know the details of the proposed law its features must be cautiously worked out to correct much of the experience of the past with this class of banks. While private banks are not the only banks that have defrauded the public, new laws should be built on experience.—Elkhart Review.

RUSH NAVY BUILDING.

Nations Hurry Construction of Big Battle Ships.

The lessons of the war between Russia and Japan have influenced naval construction all over the world. The tendency is toward bigger battle ships, and the great nations are beginning to build them. England set the pace with the Dreadnaught, which at present is the most talked-about ship in the world. No European power laid the keel of a battle ship for a year, waiting to see how the Dreadnaught turned out. She is the first battle ship to be built with turbine engines, as well as the most powerful ever constructed, and has been a great success. We have hesitated about adopting turbine units because of the danger to the boiler room. Japan has gone ahead of us. She is having two turbine engines built for a battle ship and a cruiser at the Ford River Shipbuilding Company's yard at Quincy, Mass., and they promise to be very successful.

In the naval appropriation last year Congress provided for a 20,000 ton battle ship, but did not appropriate the money to pay for it. The Navy Department was directed to submit plans for the approval of Congress. Those plans have been submitted for a 20,000 ton ship with 25,000 horse power engines, a speed of twenty-one knots, to carry ten twelve-inch guns. It will cost about \$10,000,000. Our most expensive battle ship up to date has cost about \$7,000,000. The proposed ship will require thirty officers and 650 men.

The Dreadnaught is a little smaller having a displacement of 18,000 tons, and a little faster, having a speed of twenty-one and a half knots, and has the same armament as the leviathan proposed for our navy. Three duplicates of the Dreadnaught are now approaching completion in the English shipyards, and the admiralty has decided to ask parliament for the money to build three more.

England also has under construction three vessels of an entirely new type. They may be called light-armored battle ships or swift battleship cruisers. They have the tonnage and armament of a battleship with the speed and the armor of a cruiser. Their displacement is 17,300 tons, their engines will carry them at the rate of twenty-five knots an hour and their turrets will be armed with eight twelve-inch guns. Their armor is considerably lighter than that of the Dreadnaught.

Germany will have eighteen battle ships of the new Dreadnaught type of 18,000 tons, twenty-one knots speed and ten twelve-inch guns by 1910.

France is building six battle ships of a similar type, to be called the Danton, Mirabeau, Voltaire, Diderot, Condorcet and Vergnaud, each with a displacement of 18,350 tons, 22,500 horse power turbine engines, four propellers, nineteen knots speed, with a coal capacity of 2,000 tons, capable of steaming 8,130 miles, and requiring a crew of thirty-one officers and 630 men.

Japan is building seven battle ships and cruisers, and has provided for several more. She has two twenty-one knot battle ships of 19,000 tons under construction, for which the turbine engines are being built in the United States. One of them is the Satsuma, which has a length of 482 feet and a beam of eighty-three and one-half feet. Her draught is twenty-seven and one-half feet and her tonnage is 19,200, or 1,200 more than the Dreadnaught. Her horse power is to be 18,000 and her armament will consist of four twelve-inch and twelve 120-millimeter guns.

Salary Grab Passed.

The United States senate has voted to increase the salaries of senators, representatives and territorial delegates to congress from \$5,000 to \$7,500 a year and to increase the salaries of the vice president and the speaker of the house and cabinet members from \$8,000 to \$12,000 a year. The salary increase has already passed the house of representatives. The increase carried in the senate by a vote of 53 to 41, after an amendment confining the increase to the vice president, the speaker and cabinet members and an amendment postponing the increase until 1913 had been defeated. This will give the Democrats a majority in congress two years from now. The people are opposed to the increase and will say so by their votes in 1908.

Taxing Bachelors.

The bills to tax bachelors already propose to tax them all alike without regard to their ability to pay. Why would it not be more just and better calculated to accomplish the supposed end in view to add a certain percentage—say 50 to 100 per cent—to the other tax bills of bachelors on the theory that they should pay in proportion to the cost of maintaining the families it is assumed they ought to have? That would produce more revenue and not affect the poor fellows who are not worth enough to be taxed on other accounts.

State's Welfare First.

Governor Hanly is not an issue in the legislature. He recommended some good measures in his message. Others were the veriest chaff and already the House has properly disapproved of some of them. No man should be guided in his action on any measure because of like or dislike of Hanly. The merits of the bill alone should be the guide to his action.

Russian Jews in New York.

In a classification of immigration according to the countries from which they come we find that the chief sources of supply for several years have been Italy, Austria-Hungary and Russia. Except in the case of Italy, however, the country does not indicate the race, and the leading racial elements are the Italian, Jewish and Polish. During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1905, the Jews alone numbered 130,000. There are enough of them every year to make a good-sized city.

Of these newcomers it is said that 70,000 are added to the population of New York annually. The fact is undoubtedly true that the recent growth of that city is largely explained by an enormous immigration and the inclination of many of the immigrants to remain where they land. Burton J. Hendrick, who gives the figures for the Jews in his article "The Great Jewish Invasion" in McClure's, declares that New York now contains some 800,000 of these people, most of them from Russia. He says that they make up one-fifth of the population of the greater city and one-quarter of the population of Manhattan. The change in twenty-five years has been remarkable. In 1881 the Jewish residents numbered but 50,000, and they were mostly German and Austrian Jews. Between them and the late arrivals there is little association. "Intermarriages have been about as infrequent and as much frowned upon as between Protestants and Catholics. The German element is probably not one-sixth of the whole Jewish population."

Popcorn Man in Congress.

William Alden Smith, Republican congressman, who will succeed General Alger in the United States senate from Michigan, was so poor a boy at twelve in his home at Dowagiac, Mich., that he was glad of a chance to go to Grand Rapids and work as a popcorn vendor.

While selling corn he made a friend of Speaker J. T. Rich, of the Michigan house of representatives, and Rich appointed young Smith a page in 1879.

He began to study law in 1882, and was admitted to the bar at twenty-four, and later became general counsel for the Chicago and West Michigan and the Detroit, Grand Rapids and Western railroads.

He was made state game warden under Governor Luce in 1887, which position he held until 1891. Later he was instrumental in building a logging railroad from Rapid City to Kalaska and Stratford, and afterward his Lowell and Hastings branch to Belding.

When the Pere Marquette wanted these branches it is said that Smith made somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100,000. He was elected to represent the Fifth Michigan district in 1896, and has been elected by increased majorities since. In March, 1906, he bought a controlling interest in the Grand Rapids Herald, in which he had previously owned some stock. Smith was born May 12, 1859, was married in 1885 to Maria Osterhout, and is father of one son, William Alden Smith, Jr.

Seed Corn Special.

Arrangements have been completed for the running of a special seed corn train over the Pennsylvania lines in Indiana by the Purdue Experiment Station. The train will start February 25th and will continue on the trip 15 days, covering 1500 miles of the Pennsylvania system in the state. More than 165 stops will be made, at which lectures will be given, and printed literature be distributed. At no time has the seed corn of the state been in a more serious condition than at the present and at no time has the Experiment Station been in a better position to lend assistance than right now. Those wishing schedules or other information can obtain the same by applying to G. I. Christie, Lafayette, Ind.

A Really Great Man.

James Smith, who left his fortune of half a million dollars to the United States for the founding of an institution for "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men," was the illegitimate son of Sir Hugh Smithson, afterwards Duke of Northumberland. His mother was a niece of the Duke of Somerset and had the blood of English kings in her veins. His half brother, the legitimate son of his father, was the Lord Percy, who commanded the British forces at Bunker Hill. Such are the inconsistencies of fate. The "bar sinister" of his birth darkened and saddened James Smithson's life, but through his noble bequest his name will be remembered when kings and queens are forgotten.

Where Men Do Not Vote.

One of the things that puzzles a foreigner of an inquiring turn of mind is that at the seat of the United States government—with its high officials, executive and judicial—the people have absolutely no say in the government, local or general. No resident of the city of Washington, in District of Columbia, has a right to vote. As a matter of fact, no voting of any kind is allowed there. And what is more, very few of the better class of people living there would assent to the re-introduction of the right of suffrage in the District of Columbia. They are entirely willing to pay taxes, even though they do not luxuriate in the precious glory of representation.

STORY OF TORTURE.

Daniel Hesston Meets Terrible Fate in Shack.

The body of Daniel Hesston, the aged hermit, which was found in his shack near Eau Claire, Mich., Tuesday morning, was horribly mutilated. His fingers and toes were cut off and marks on the rafter showed that he had been hung and then let down to induce him to tell where his money was hidden.

Hesston had not been seen in several days and an investigation led to the discovery of the murder. About seven years ago Hesston inherited a fortune of \$25,000. The old man immediately began a wild career of dissipation and spent hundreds of dollars for liquor. A short time ago he appeared on the street in Eau Claire flashing a roll which he declared contained \$10,000, all that remained of his pile. That his murderers saw him with the money and determined to get it from him is the theory of the sheriff.

Alone and defenseless, the old man, it is thought, was overpowered and he refused to tell where his hoard was hidden. One by one his fingers were chopped off, then his toes, and placed in a pan before him. To add to the terrible torture there is evidence that the old man was strung up and let down time and time again to force him to reveal where the money was.

Then his head was cut in many places with a hatchet, the awful treatment killing him. His body was also otherwise mutilated. It is thought the robbers found the \$10,000 as every piece of furniture in the shack was broken in pieces, boards torn from the floor and even the chimney and stove were wrecked. The sheriff is without a clue.

West Indian Negroes.

Addressing the Knife and Fork club of Kansas City, Mr. Shonts made a surprising statement about the common laborers from the West Indies employed on the canal. He said experience had shown that no price of food could be low enough to induce them to eat a sufficient quantity to keep them in good physical condition. It was only when the food was cooked and offered them free that they ate heartily.

Now, what is to become of the negro's reputation as a glutton? A glut of food will not starve himself when he can get plenty to eat for a sum equal to one-third of his wages or less. Mr. Shonts was evidently surprised at the discovery that the West Indian negroes would go hungry to save money where a good meal could be had for 10 cents.

Colored Woman's Bravery.

Miss Mattie Merritt, of Indianapolis, aged 28, a negro woman, gave her life in an effort to save two nieces, Lovena Taylor, aged five, and Effa King, aged 3, from death in flames. The woman perished, and with her the two little ones were burned to death. The woman had returned to the bedroom where the children lay, after she had herself found safety in the open air. She smashed a window and clambered into the room, and was in the act of rescue when the flames overcame her. The open window caused a draught which fanned the fire to such a fury that she was cut off from hope of escape.

The explosion of a lamp started the fire which consumed the house, a three room cottage.

Uncle Sam's Purchase.

When Alaska was purchased by the United States government forty years ago for \$7,000,000, there was a loud cry against the investment. It was claimed that Uncle Sam had bought an iceberg. The claim was characteristic of those who have found reasons for objecting to every constructive act of the American government for a hundred years. It is now stated that since the purchase of this vast territory the United States has received as revenue from the lease of the sealing privilege on the Pribilof Islands, more than nine million dollars, or two million more than we paid for the territory. The trade in skins on the Pribilof Islands by Americans since the purchase of Alaska exceeds fifty million dollars in value.

Can Not Drain Great Lakes.

The army engineers have advised Secretary Taft that he has no authority to permit the Sanitary Board of Chicago to reverse the flow of the Calumet River and create a current through that waterway from Lake Michigan into the Mississippi River. This finding is based upon the conclusion that the project would lower the level of Lake Michigan and injuriously affect navigation in various ports and harbors which the Government has improved. The secretary has this finding under advisement and expects to announce his decision soon.

Not to be Parted in Death.

The house committee on military affairs has decided to make a favorable report on a bill permitting the wives of enlisted men or of buried in the same grave with their husbands in national cemeteries. This measure was strongly urged for several years by Mrs. Tanner, the wife of "Corporal" Tanner. Mrs. Tanner was killed in an automobile accident last summer. Since her death "Corporal" Tanner has worked for the measure, and he is largely responsible for its progress.

A Talk About Earthquakes.

Professor Belar, seismologist chief of the Laibach observatory at Austria, reports a general disturbance of the earth's surface and predicts more earthquakes. This however, need not cause general alarm, because the earth has been always more or less uneasy. Yet of late she has dealt more gently with wicked mankind than in earlier days. Scientists are quite convinced that the flood that caused Noah to build the ark was caused by a big earthquake and there is little doubt that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed in this manner. Two hundred thousand persons are said to have perished in one earthquake alone a couple of centuries ago in Yeddo, Japan, so the present disturbances are not so startling, though the newspapers are more enterprising in securing the details of the disasters.

As to the cause of earthquakes one can accept any of a dozen theories and give just as good evidence of its being tenable as the next one, for here is where learned scientists fall out. There are those who believe earthquakes to be acts of God as a punishment for sin, and can prove their theory by the Bible. Sodom was wicked that Lot's wife was turned to salt just because she looked back at it, and San Francisco people did a lot of things that were not quite proper. Then there is the mechanical theory about slipping strata; the volcanic theory of fires in the earth's center; the astronomical theory of the influence of the moon and the stars; the electrical theory of subtle velocity of electric motion; the chemical theory of fermenting or decomposing minerals; and still other theories which may or may not be correct.

Earthquakes are accompanied by a variety of notifications, but the uninitiated can best recognize them by the sound of a rough or moaning wind, a deep peal of thunder or of a heavy wagon being driven over a stone pavement. There is an average of one a day recorded, Japan suffering the worst. They are more frequent in winter than in summer. One scientist says this is because of the weight of the snow and the greater pressure of atmosphere, but he may be wrong. They used to confine themselves more generally to South Africa, the Orient and Central Asia, but of late, are almost as frequent in the western hemisphere. Some day their cause may be established, but this is doubtful.

Would Affect Modern Woodmen.

According to Indiana officers of the Modern Woodmen of America, the Babcock insurance bill, if passed as it now stands will force the Woodmen to suspend business in Indiana, at least until June, 1908, and perhaps permanently. There are 35,000 policy holders in the state and all would be affected. The Babcock bill proposes that all fraternal insurance companies in Indiana adopt the rating basis of the National Fraternal congress, composed of forty fraternal companies. The congress rate is higher than that of the Woodmen, varying from \$10 premium on a \$1,000 policy at 21 to \$25 at 45 years. The rating basis of the Woodmen can only be changed by the head camp, the highest legislative body of the order, and they will not meet until June, 1908. It is very doubtful whether the head camp would change the rating basis to satisfy one state. The membership in the United States is nearly 1,000,000. There are 19 Woodmen in the House and they are getting busy.

Eliminating the Pension Agents.

United States pension agents get \$4,000 a year. There are eighteen of them in all, scattered over the country. They have offices in which they keep duplicate rolls of all the recipients of pensions in their respective districts, and they have also clerks who fill out the periodical pension checks. The commissioners sign the checks in addition to drawing their salaries.

In these days of fast mails there is no more reason why a man in Peoria should get his check from Chicago than why he should get it from Washington. For that matter, there is no more reason why a man in Hyde Park should get his check from an office in the federal building than why he should get it from Washington. The pension agents are parasites on the pay roll. If the whole work was handled at the central office in Washington not only would their salaries be saved—a matter of \$72,000 a year—but also there would be a material saving in clerk hire because of the elimination of the duplicate pension lists.—Record Herald.

Would Extend Direct Vote.

Representative Lamar of Florida, introduced a bill in congress Friday providing for the election of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States by the people, the chief justice to be selected by the judges after their election. He would have the United States divided into nine districts for the purpose of holding the judicial elections. The bill also provides that postmasters shall be elected by the popular vote.

Salary Grabbing.

The bookkeeper timidly approached. "If you please," he said, "I would like a raise of pay." "You, too?" fairly moaned the capitalist. "Say do you want to sink to the moral level of a Congressman? I won't be a party to your downfall!"—Philadelphia Ledger.

OLIVER'S PANAMA BID.

President Says Contractor Shall Be Given Chance.

William J. Oliver will be given the contract for constructing the Panama Canal, provided that within the next ten days he associates himself with at least two independent contractors, whose skill and experience, combined with his own, will cover the entire field of the work.

This decision was reached at a conference at the White House Saturday night, when the President insisted that Mr. Oliver should be given an opportunity to make satisfactory arrangements to substitute some other contractor or group of contractors to take the place of Mr. Bangs. Powerful influences were brought to bear on the President and Secretary Taft to reject all bids and advertise for new proposals, but the President took the position that since Mr. Oliver had met all the requirements of the government it would be unjust to reject his bid of 6.75 per cent for the construction of the canal or even to require him to submit a new bid for the contract.

Mr. Oliver had informed the President that it was his desire to submit an independent bid for the work, and that when the canal commission officials informed him that it would be necessary to form a partnership with some other financially responsible contractor they even went so far as to suggest that he enter into an agreement with Anson M. Bangs of New York City. Mr. Oliver said that after receiving this suggestion from Chairman Shonts he visited the War Department and was informed that Mr. Bangs would be entirely satisfactory to the government. Mr. Oliver told the President that with this assurance as to the reliability of Mr. Bangs he immediately entered into an agreement with the New York contractor.

Mutual Rural Telephone System.

A meeting was held in Kuhn's hall Saturday afternoon, with about 100 citizens and farmers present, for the purpose of taking steps toward the organization of a Mutual Telephone system in this county.

The movement was started by farmers using rural phones out of Argos. It seems that these farmers have been grieved by poor service, and appeals having been made in vain, they adopted the plan of organizing a stock company to institute a system of rural phones throughout the entire county and also make connections with Plymouth, Bourbon, Argos and other towns of the county.

A. O. Roose of Walnut township, opened the meeting, stated the purpose of the same, and officers were then elected.

O. A. Greiner was chosen president, and Warren McFarlin secretary and treasurer. Plans for the establishment of the system were discussed by L. M. Lauer, Chas. Heim, Peter Heim, A. O. Roose, and others and all were strongly in favor of proceeding with the movement.

Examples were given of Whitley, Kosciusko and other counties where the Mutual system has been installed and is now working with the best of success. The Bell telephone company has in similar cases shown itself willing to make connections with these systems, and the farmers feel that they will in this case also.

It was agreed that another meeting should be called to which Mr. Anglin, the man who installed the Mutual system in Kosciusko, be invited to give advice regarding the setting up of such a system in this county.

A working committee was appointed for the purpose of meeting committees from other townships, to draw up a written plan of organization. This committee was composed of Chas. Heim, N. A. Goodrich, V. A. Lidecker, John Richards, Wm. Beck, Jesse Miller, and Elmer Weeding, Chas. Heim to act as chairman.

Many Bills Killed in Legislature.

Throughout the two weeks the house has been in a killing humor. Antilobby bill, backed by the governor's message the bill abolishing the board of pardons the bill against capital punishment—these, the chief bills killed. In addition to this two bills carrying small appropriations were killed, one raising the salary of the geologist from \$2,500 to \$4,000 and one appropriating money with which to fight the San Jose Scale, the latter bill being killed because of a fight in the State Horticultural society. Of the 10 bills passed by the house, only one, a bill relating to the preservation of shrubs and trees deserves any mention. The others are local. The house with the senate is to be given credit for the passage of two joint resolutions, one requiring the railroad commission to investigate the two wrecks and one authorizing the governor to aid the flood sufferers.

The digestion of the members of the senate has been better. The only two bills of importance killed by the body were the ones increasing the amount paid to the circuit judges over the state from \$2,500 to \$3,500 and the one specifically permitting women to hold state office and be eligible to the different state boards.

As usual both branches have killed more bills than they have passed, 24 bills having passed one or the other of the branches and 34 having been killed. The house has killed practically twice as many bills as it has passed—19 to 10; the senate has killed 15 and passed one less.

For a Better Understanding.

The recent conference held at the residence of Mrs. Potter Palmer in Chicago by representatives of capital and labor had for its sole object the promotion of a better understanding between these two essential elements in the growth of civilization and the prosperity of the nation. They met informally in the art gallery of the Palmer residence, which easily accommodated the 600 present. The discussion was by the leaders, but the spirit of the occasion and the information gained sent forth each of the 600 as an evangelist for the gospel of "a better understanding."

Prominent among the informal addresses was the report of ex-Mayor Seth Low, of New York, chairman of the conciliation committee of the National Civic Federation. This committee is composed of representatives of employers, employees, the business public and philanthropic social economists. Its object is to allay discontent and prevent strife and promote a better understanding between capital and labor. The underlying principles of the organization were thus stated by Mr. Low:

"The National Civic Federation does all of its work in the profound belief that the American men, whether employers or workmen, want to do the fair thing. We know that each one emphasizes his point of view. That is natural. But, after all, we believe that if we can get fair-minded men together and discuss a definite question of disagreement, in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred both sides, with the light that the other can throw upon it, will find the middle path between the two extremes which all will consider fair."

The meeting at Mrs. Palmer's mansion was but one incident in the general movement, not only in this country, but throughout the world to bring men in closer relations that they may recognize their points of agreement rather than their differences and antagonisms.

Money in Campaigns.

The bill which has just passed the house to prohibit corporations from contributing to the funds of parties in political campaigns is certain to become a law. Last summer the senate passed a bill on the same general line. The house bill makes one change in the senate measure, and that proposes an increase in the penalty for violation. A quick agreement on the bill will be reached between the two branches. As the president, in several messages, has urged a law covering this ground, the bill will be promptly signed when he gets hold of it.

Under the bill as it has passed each branch of congress, national banks and all other corporations organized by any law of congress are forbidden to contribute money to be used in any canvass in which officials are to be elected. And corporations of all sorts, whether chartered by nation, state or municipality, are prohibited from giving any money in connection with any election in which presidential electors or members of either branch of congress are to be voted for, or in which legislatures are to be chosen which will elect United States senators. It is not easy to see how congress could go any farther than it has now done in its work of shutting off the financial supplies from